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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, throughout the ages You recognize, more than we, those who show the greatest courage and patience in difficult times such as during war.

Those who serve in the military are often in our prayers, Lord, and deserve this Nation's greatest respect and gratitude. You alone know however the great sacrifice their families face when preparing to deploy, during deployment, and when their loved one comes home. Even more pain and long suffering is endured by those military families who lose a family member in service to their country.

Today, the House raises up in prayer all military families. Strengthen them in love and faith that they always prove supportive. Provide them with great grace and inner freedom to embrace the separation and flexibility demanded of them due to military orders.

Lord, above all others, it is the voice of military families that are proudly heard when our Nation's anthem is sung from "the land of the free and the home of the brave." Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ELECTING MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 237

Resolved, That the following named Member be and is hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.—Ms. Woolsey (to rank immediately after Mr. Gene Green of Texas).

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR of Arizona). The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was announced that North Carolina's unemployment rate for January is 9.7 percent. This represents a 16 percent increase from December, and it is at its highest mark in 26 years. I have good reason, Mr. Speaker, to worry that the numbers will be even worse in my congressional district when they are reported.

It was devastating to learn yesterday that Cummins Diesel, Incorporated, will lay off 25 percent of its workforce. That is 390 people in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, an area that is already

suffering an unemployment rate of nearly 14 percent.

We must pull together, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans, to rally behind President Obama's plan to revive our economy. This is not a quick fix. It is a measured, responsible, transparent and accountable approach.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in helping families who are hurting.

THANKING JAY LENO FOR HIS SUPPORT OF METRO DETROIT WORKERS

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, all too often, it seems as though celebrities get caught up in their own life and have little time for those who are struggling in this very difficult economy. Well, Jay Leno is not one of those people. In fact, I think Jay Leno is an American hero today, because on Tuesday's Tonight Show, Jay Leno announced he will soon be doing a show at the Palace of Auburn Hills in Metro Detroit for the unemployed workers who have been struggling in this difficult economy, and the show will be absolutely free of charge.

Jay is donating his immense talent in an effort to give those workers who have been struggling a night out for a few laughs. I certainly also want to praise the leaders of the Palace who have offered up the facility free of charge for this event.

Jay Leno is a "car guy" who understands the hard work done by our Nation's auto workers and the incredible products they produce, and he understands that in this tough economy, many of those workers no longer have jobs.

It is absolutely outstanding that he is doing this to help lift their spirits

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and to help highlight the economic challenges that we face around our Nation, but especially in southeast Michigan. I want to thank you, Jay Leno. We in Metro Detroit welcome you, and you have our sincere thanks.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address our current economic crisis and the careful and responsible investments in America that President Obama and this Congress have made. The Federal Reserve has predicted that without action, our economy will contract by \$2 trillion over the next 2 years. With a recession that has persisted since December of 2007, we cannot expect an overnight cure. However we are cushioning the fall.

There was no one cause for the economic collapse. Instead, we have taken a number of positive steps in various areas to address the various facets of this economic decline. The second half of the TARP funding will help stabilize the financial sector. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will create millions of jobs, including 9,300 in my district. The Help Families Save Their Homes Act will keep millions of honest, hardworking Americans from foreclosure and help stabilize the housing values of their neighbors not currently in crisis. The Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Act the House recently passed adds crucial investments in public safety, energy efficiency, clean water and mass transit.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the fact that this Congress has joined with the President in responding to the financial crisis.

THE TRUTH WILL GET YOU SUED

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, they say the truth will set you free. Well, maybe not. Now the truth may get you sued. Here is why.

The Staples Company fired an employee for lying on his expense account, and then sent a warning e-mail to all other employees on this action. The former employee sued, saying the company's actions were "malicious and harmful." A Federal court in Massachusetts ruled with the employee, even though the statements were true.

Mr. Speaker, it has long been the law in this country that libel and slander only occur when the statement is false and malicious. But not anymore. So what is going to happen when the New York Times has a headline tomorrow morning saying "Bernie Madoff, Worst Thief in American History, Goes to Jail?" Even though that statement

might be true, while old Bernie is in the big house, he may decide to sue, saying his reputation is ruined.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution protects free speech and a free press. The Federal courts in Massachusetts were wrong to say that truthful speech is unlawful if it offends somebody or hurts their little feelings.

And that's just the way it is.

DISPELLING A HEALTH CARE MYTH

(Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as we begin in this Congress a potentially transformational debate on the future of health care, I think it is time that we start dispelling some of the myths about American health care. So let's start with this one.

If I told you that the country which spent the most money on health care also ranked among the highest in wait times for care, opponents of health care reform would scream, "Well, that is what you get with socialized medicine." The sad fact is that I'm describing our own health care system. A recent study published in *Business Week* showed that amongst the six top industrialized nations, the U.S. ranked fifth in medical wait times. We ranked behind New Zealand, Britain, Germany and Australia. In addition, 26 percent of Americans reported going to the ER for treatment because they couldn't get in to see their doctor, and ER wait times for heart attack patients has nearly doubled in the last 5 years.

So when you hear these anecdotes about people waiting for care in other countries that guarantee health care, know the facts. Americans wait longer.

□ 1015

CONGRESS SPENDING \$1 BILLION AN HOUR

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, folks in America ought to be outraged. They have a right to know that Congress has spent roughly \$1 billion an hour since the new President took office.

Recently, Michael Allen of Politico wrote about a speech in the other body. He described a crafty Senator's efforts to express his deep concern that the Nation is spending way too much money, and America can't afford this free-for-all spending Congress.

In just 50 days, the Congress voted to spend about \$1.2 trillion between the stimulus and the omnibus. That amounts to \$24 billion a day, or about a billion dollars an hour, most of it borrowed money.

Congress spending \$1 billion an hour? Pew.

HONORING CORPORAL BRIAN M. CONNELLY

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Corporal Brian M. Connelly, who was killed in Iraq on February 26 when his vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb. Corporal Connelly was a combat engineer and was in the vehicle's gunning position at the time of the attack.

He lived in Union Beach, New Jersey, where he had recently married Kara Connelly. His job in Iraq as an engineer involved protecting the way for other soldiers. He lost his life essentially helping his comrades in arms.

His family and friends remember him as a man who had a great sense of humor and loved fishing and boating and being out on the water.

I attended the memorial service of Corporal Connelly in Keyport this past weekend to pay my respects to the corporal and his family and friends.

Too often we are tragically reminded of the human costs this war has placed on our country's citizens. His family kept a "Bring Our Troops Home" banner above their home, reinforcing their hopes that Brian would return home safely as soon as possible.

Corporal Connelly was an American hero. He was my constituent, and I am proud to pay tribute to him in our Capitol today.

DIFFICULT TIMES IN AMERICA

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, during these difficult times, families and small businesses across the land are making hard choices to make ends meet. Sacrifices are being made everywhere, except in Washington, D.C.

While Americans are finding ways to cut back, the Democrat Congress and our President have gone on an unprecedented spending binge, bailout after bailout, a \$1 trillion stimulus bill. Yesterday, the President signed an omnibus spending bill with an 8 percent increase in spending and 9,000 earmarks. And to make matters worse, the administration has proposed a massive Federal budget that spends too much, borrows too much and taxes too much, and the American people know it. Even a distinguished colleague on the Budget Committee said recently: "This is not an easy budget to market, for sure."

Well, I say respectfully to my colleagues, the problem with the President's budget is not marketing, it is content. The American people want Congress to do what they are doing, make sacrifices, be there for our neighbors and embrace fiscal discipline and responsible plans for growth; not a Federal budget that spends too much, taxes too much and borrows too much.